

lines here: "It is not fashion nor wealth nor social position that imports, only truth and love and faith and duty; only passion for spiritual ideals can make life possess any lasting value. All who thus live, whether in a palace or in a cottage, belong to earth's nobility. Queen, crowned of God—her empire is not bounded by India and the islands of the sea, it includes the sunrise and the sunset and the splendid stars."

HYGIENE OF THE HOUSEHOLD

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(Concluded from page 435)

"As a man's home is, such is his life. Life is given us that we may train all our faculties, and the business of the Twentieth Century is to see that the home shall make man, woman, boy, or girl stronger and better fitted for new duty all the time."

—EDWARD EVERETT HALE.

THE thoughts of spring house-cleaning are borne in to us on the waves of fresh spring air, as we open wide our windows these April mornings.

Nature is cleaning out-of-doors, with buckets full of clear rain-water, numerous wind-brooms, and dainty new draperies and carpets all over her summer home, and the good housewife prepares to fold away all thoughts of winter in camphor bags and cedar chests, and put the house in summer attire before the languid days are upon us.

In order of sequence the kitchen is the last room in the house to be adorned, but we will reverse this order for once and commence at the foundation of our homes, keeping in mind the importance of applying the principles of hygiene to everything which is of service in the care and preparation of the material which we use in building up our physical life.

I venture to state that in the majority of homes, great and small, little attention is paid to the hygienic surroundings of the room where our daily bread is prepared.

We are flooded with health-foods, scientific treatment of diet, selected diet-lists to suit all sorts and conditions of man, but behind all

lies the kitchen, sometimes dark, gloomy, and unhealthy, and frequently in need of a thorough overhauling.

To begin with, sunshine almost never gets a chance to peep in at the kitchen window—that is, in the city homes, with the low basement kitchen of the self-contained house, or the slip of a room on the darkest and least attractive side of the apartment-house which is set aside for the workroom of the home.

For the sake of the cook, maid-of-all-work, or home-mother who has to do her own work, as well as for the benefit of the family who eat the food prepared in the kitchen, sunshine must be introduced artificially if it cannot come naturally.

The ceiling and walls require painting much oftener than the rest of the house, as they grow dingy rapidly.

A pale yellow on the walls will almost deceive one in regard to the absence of sunshine; white soils too soon. Enamel paint should be used, and if washed off once a month, will always have a bright, clean face.

Oftentimes a blank wall stretches its gloomy length in front of the kitchen window, grimy with coal-dust. Nothing will overcome this difficulty but a fresh coat of paint on the wall and a clean muslin sash curtain at the window, which latter has another advantage, as it tends to curb the curiosity of one's neighbor.

Linoleum for the floor should be in very light colors, the design small, and the pattern clear and decided. In country kitchens a small rug at sink and washtubs during the winter will receive grateful recognition.

In the home where one maid is kept a gas-stove is without equal for saving time and trouble: no ashes to be removed, no fire to be watched, or agonizing efforts to make it burn when determined to go out at the critical moment. All the removable parts of the stove should be boiled in a strong solution of washing-soda every six months, and the gas will burn brightly and evenly.

Porcelain sinks are now placed in the new kitchens, and they are a delight to the eye in contrast to the dark, doubtful depths of the old-time sink; of course, a wire brush, with no resting place for microbes, usurps the place of the old straw sink-broom.

The pail for scraps should have a close-fitting cover and be scalded and aired daily.

In an up-to-date modern kitchen, with walls tiled to the roof, electric light, and many other luxuries, I was shown the large kitchen table covered by a heavy sheet of glass, certainly the height of kitchen hygiene, as it is so easily cleaned and allows no resting place for germs.

This kitchen contained a rack to hang pots of all sizes of polished

copper, but the cook opened the glass doors of a large closet and pointed to a supply of granite ware, which she said were the real workers, the copper ones being ornamental but not useful, on account of the polishing they required.

Whatever we undertake to do, we are greatly helped by having our tools at hand, and so it is with cooking. A carpenter's strap fastened on the wall, over the stove, to hold large and small spoons, forks, knives, etc., saves many footsteps, also a shelf with a row of neatly labelled bottles for seasonings and small groceries. All sorts and sizes of bottles, jars, or boxes may be utilized, the main point being to have a cover and plainly marked label for each, and to put the shelf in a convenient place.

The well-run apartment-houses employ a man to visit all the kitchens once a week and blow around a strong powder to prevent cockroaches from taking up their abode, and the plan is excellent—not to await their arrival, but to powder all suspicious corners weekly and thus discourage their advance. Absolute cleanliness, with no food left uncovered, is the greatest aid in getting rid of these pests.

“Please, ma’am, may I see the kitchen?” is not infrequently asked in these days by the maid applying for a position. And not without reason is the place refused when she is ushered into a gloomy, unattractive kitchen, where she is expected to spend the greater part of her time.

We are learning rapidly that our surroundings have a large influence on our lives, and a self-respecting woman cannot do justice to herself or her work when doomed to work in a dreary atmosphere. There are kitchens (and they are not few) displaying a woeful lack of clean paint, fresh air, and sufficient light, crowded with unnecessary furniture, and sometimes even pressed into service to do duty as the cook’s sleeping- and dressing-room. How can we expect such a kitchen to produce clean, well-cooked meals!

One of the perplexing causes of the “servant question” would be removed if the mistress took more care to make the kitchen an attractive workroom, and the majority of girls will take pride in keeping the room dainty and clean if the mistress shows an interest in it and looks over it at least once a week.

As regards the comfort of the cook, be she maid or mistress, a bright, growing geranium in the window will refresh her eyes, and a comfortable little rocking-chair ready for a moment’s rest “between whiles” will relieve the tired back and feet and give evidence to the fact that all the comforts of the house are not confined to the living-rooms of the family.